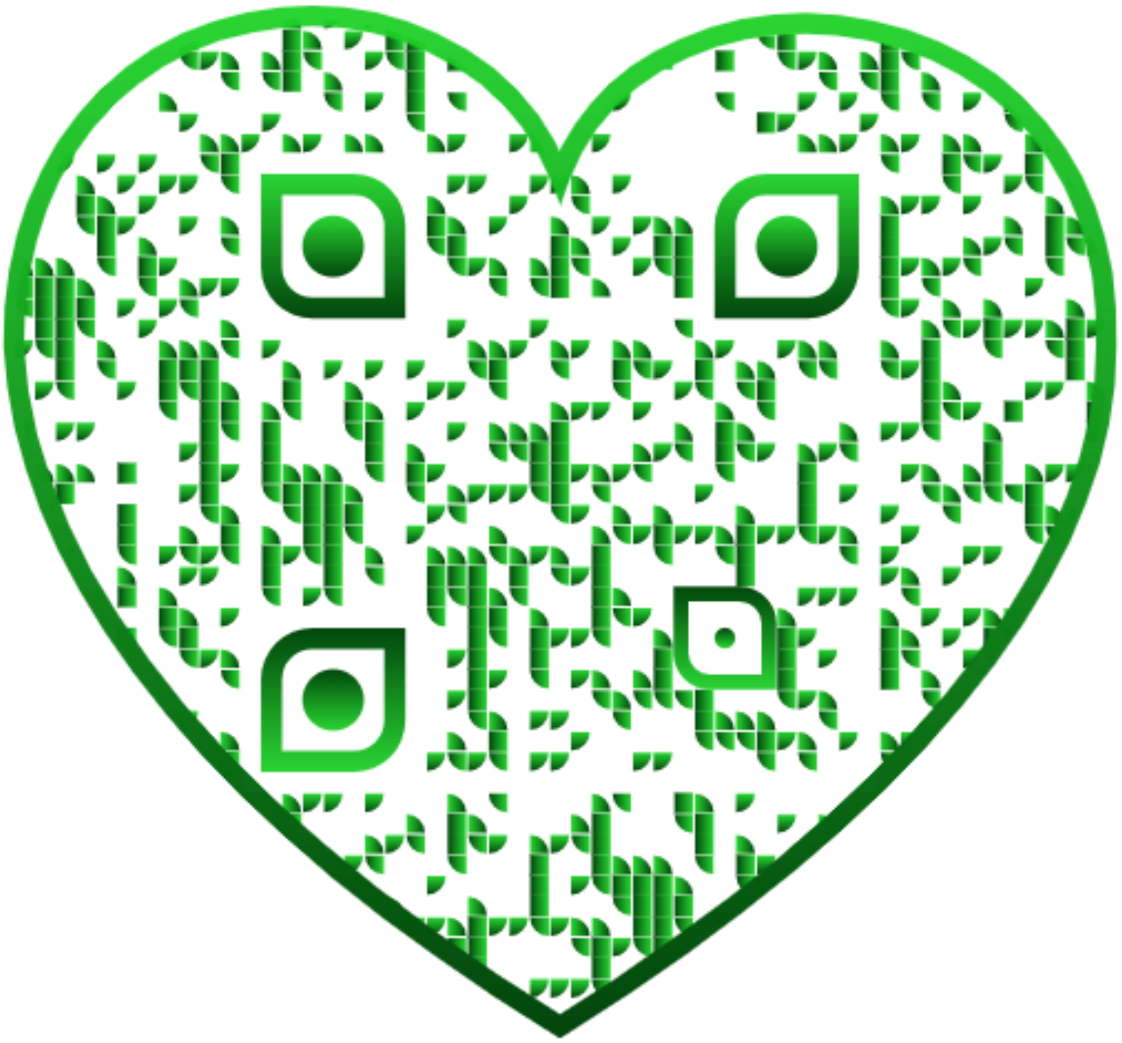
Little People

Ron Quinn



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Introduction

C

ountless people throughout history have experienced some type of strange encounter during their lives: UFOs, ghostly apparitions, little grey aliens, Bigfoot, et cetera. My mysterious venture into the unknown occurred during August 1942 while on a summer vacation in upstate New York. At the time I was a young lad of ten. Some might find this difficult to fathom. But I actually saw a little man, perhaps a foot tall, standing on a window ledge. It was a living being and not some grand hallucination conceived within an adolescent's mind.

As I reached adulthood, I became fascinated by the stories of little people seen in this area of New York. I began a lengthy investigation into these alleged sightings by both young and old.

In 1989, the story of my encounter appeared in a weekly paper in upstate New York. At the end was my name and address. I asked if others had experienced sightings of these elusive creatures. Over the weeks dozens of letters arrived from people telling me of their personal encounters or tales they once heard from family members.

The following stories are both tantalizing and mysterious, and have been gathered from people living within the region of the Catskill Mountains. Many will sound unbelievable. But at the time they were quite real to the witnesses.

RON QUINN
3/7/53

Chapter 1

My Encounter

T

his happened during August 1942 in Mongaup Valley, New York. Even today, many years later in a new century, this event is as fresh in my memory as if it

occurred only last week.

Each summer our parents would take my brother Chuck and I on a two-week vacation. Mom's older sister would accompany us with her three children, Martin, Jackie, and Rita. Our ages ranged from ten to fourteen. Dad would visit on weekends, returning home Sunday afternoon by train.

We would either head for the mountains or rent a beach house out on Long Island. Most of these vacations were filled with adventure and excitement, especially if our three wild cousins were along.

Dad knew a man named Richy Murtagh, whose parents

had acreage and a large home in Mongaup Valley. They also had a cabin nestled near the tree line that they rented out for the summer. Arrangements were made and Dad rented it for two weeks.

This vacation and the strange experience I would encounter would remain with me for all time.

Mr. Murtagh, Rich's father, met us at the train station. How we managed to all squeeze into his truck along with our baggage remains another mystery. It was a seven-mile trip to the cabin, and as we sped merrily along in the old Model A, my heart beat with excitement at the prospect of living out in the open country again.

Mr. Murtagh told us there was a river near the cabin that had a deep swimming area. Moments later we crossed a bridge, and I caught sight of the river below. Turning right, we drove a short ways up a hill. On the right stood a large, stately home surrounded by tall trees. Just below was the cabin beside

an open field. A lone cow grazed nearby, and their dog, Nelly, barked wildly as we came to a stop.

Our first afternoon was spent exploring the nearby forest. Afterwards, I remember running happily down the grassy slopes barefoot, feeling the cool lawn beneath my feet. The air had a clean freshness to it as I stopped and sat beside the others, dangling our feet in the cool running water of the river.

One day I committed a minor infraction of the law set down by Mom. I was told to return to the cabin and remain there for an hour while the others played. I was sitting at a table feeling sorry for myself. After a while I heard a sound like somebody gently tapping against glass. I looked in the direction of the sound and couldn't believe what I saw.

Standing outside on a window ledge was a small, odd-looking man, about a foot tall. I am not joking; he was there as big as life.

At this point you might be thinking: "Oh, that was just a child's imagination," but this little fellow did not entirely resemble the traditional elf, gnome or leprechaun we have all seen depicted in various books and motion pictures.

Being somewhat amazed, especially by something I knew couldn't possibly exist, I looked away in hopes the illusion would vanish. No such luck. Again came the tapping and once more I glanced up. Sure enough, he was still there, smiling and waving towards me. The sounds of the tapping came from his walking stick being struck lightly against the windowpane.

The odd little guy wore a small, crumpled hat, dark in color. A short, gray beard covered the lower part of his face. From beneath his hat, silky hair cascaded down to his narrow shoulders, covering his ears. His shirt was gray and somewhat tightfitting around his upper body. The sleeves were very baggy, and his trousers ended near his knees. Something resembling a belt encircled his wide waist. His boots, also gray, were soft in appearance, ending near the knees.

Comparing this figure to a normal man, he looked perhaps fifty or so. The eyes were the most striking feature of all. They were extremely large and full of friendship. Dumfounded, I sat gazing at this little man in complete dismay.

I might have only been a lad of ten, but I have been told many times I was years ahead of myself when it came to logical reasoning. I understood that what I was seeing just couldn't be; yet there before me was living proof.

The excitement of the trip, the lonely dark woods, and all the fun I was having could have triggered such an illusion. But once more, I was looking upon a real, living entity in every sense of the word; his facial and eye

movements; the shadow he cast on the ledge; everything was there. After several seconds this happy fellow motioned for me to come closer. I glanced out another window and saw Martin and Rita, playing with Nelly. I wanted to rush and open the door and call to them, but changed my mind for no apparent reason.

When I looked back toward the little creature, he once again motioned for me to come nearer. This time I did and knelt beside the window. He kept smiling and looked me over, as though he never had been so close to a human boy before. I didn't speak, but cautiously opened the window. Not knowing what to expect, I slowly reached out to touch the strange being that had invaded my tranquil life, but he stepped back. Tilting his head from side to side, he inspected me from all angles.

Smiling, the little guy leaped from the ledge, landing gracefully on the grass below. He ran with long leaps across the lawn. Stopping, he looked back momentarily before vanishing among the shadows near the tree line.

I ran from the cabin and told the others, but they only laughed, as I might have had I heard the story from another. Mom smiled, saying I was day-dreaming, or had one wild imagination. The others went on to tease me for several days.

Occasionally while out among the trees, one of them would stop and call out, "Look, over there. I just saw that little man dart across the path!" Then they would all run off laughing. I guess I was the big joke around there for a while. My story even reached the general store.

Throughout the remainder of our vacation, I kept an eye out for that little fellow, but I never saw him again. Perhaps he was somewhere in the forest, watching us.

You might ask why I am so positive about my seeing this little oddity that entered my life. Well, the final proof of the pudding was the little footprint left in the soft earth below the window. When the little guy leaped, one foot landed on the grass, while the other hit the moist ground, leaving a perfect outline of his footprint. It resembled the mark you would make if you stepped into some soft earth while wearing only socks. I was accused by my family of making it myself, which I hadn't. * * *

I'm very open-minded. Either I saw a small being, or I didn't. There can be no middle ground. This brings to mind the well-known phrase: "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Chapter 2

Big Bob and the Little Man

T

his is one of the first stories I received during my research into the legends surrounding these mysterious little people.

Big Bob McCain was a giant of a man, standing well over six-foot-five and weighing some three hundred pounds of pure brawn. He wore a short black beard and was missing several front teeth. Despite his rugged appearance, Bob was a gentle man. He had a heart as large as his body, and was always there to lend a helping hand to those in need.

Bob trapped near Canada and used the Hudson River to ferry his pelts to market. During the early 1830s, Bob had a

string of traps near the St. Lawrence River. He would depart come fall and work his trap line till spring.

This big character could spin ghostly tales about his adventures in the wilderness. Most were true, but Bob had fun stretching the truth to enhance the yarns. When telling his stories, he knew his friends didn't entirely believe him. But that was part of the game—seeing what he could get away with. Anyway, most folks enjoyed his wild tales while relaxing around camp.

Bob once became very serious about a particular story, and swore it was true. But having been caught in numerous falsehoods, he was in the same category as the boy who cried wolf.

One morning while checking traps he heard a sound like a young child calling for help. He followed the sound along a brook and came to a clearing.

When in town, Bob would tip the bottle with the best. But this time he was sober as a judge.
The sight which greeted his eyes made him gasp in disbelief. There, caught in a trap, was a little man some two feet tall.

The tiny fellow began screaming his lungs out. He kept yelling and tugging desperately at the jaws of the trap holding him. His leg was clamped in a trap that could have broken it, but the leg was undamaged. He had a look of sheer terror as Bob slowly approached. Bob reached down and sprung the trap open, at the same time gently picking the tiny guy up. He kept yelling and struggling to free himself. Maybe he thought he was about to be devoured. The strangest thing about this little man was that he had no weight. Bob could feel his body, but weight was missing.

It was like holding nothing.
"Calm down little fellow," said Bob. "I won't hurt ya none."
His captive was more frightened than injured. His trousers were torn, but no sign of blood was visible.
Bob said the tiny fellow had green, leathery clothing and boots. His eyes were large but he hadn't any eyebrows. He wore a small beard and had an odd looking scarf around his neck.
Bob still couldn't get over the fact that he was weightless. In all my research I have never heard a statement like this.
As far as I know, nobody else has ever held one of these little creatures.
Bob knelt and placed his captive on the ground. The little man stood up, looked at the gigantic form before him, and slowly backed away. Reaching the safety of the trees, he turned and fled into the forest.
Looking down, Bob discovered that the tiny guy had forgotten his hat. He used this as evidence when telling his strange story.
This mysterious hat was reportedly on display in some general store during the early 1930s. What became of Big Bob is unknown. Like others before him, this friendly giant vanished into the dusty pages of history.
Is this tale true? If the encounter was nothing more than a fabrication, how would an uneducated mountain man think of something so bizarre as the little guy having no weight? One thing we should remember: "Life comes in many forms."

Chapter 3

The Night of the Little People

T

his adventure into the mysterious realm of the little ones also takes place in northern New York, when Tommy was eleven during the summer of 1948. Tommy and his parents had finished supper around six

o'clock. His father retired to his workshop afterwards to complete several small jobs. Tommy went to care for his pet rabbits. Later that evening all three sat on the front porch, relaxing and sipping freshly made lemonade. It was a quiet summer evening, but occasionally the silence was broken by the call of a bird among the trees. Fleecy clouds drifted lazily across the face of the moon. It was a peaceful ending to a busy day.

The family dog Max was out among the nearby trees bark

ing at something in the darkness. Suddenly, he gave a loud yap and came running back to the safety of the house. He sat whimpering beside Tommy and looking back toward the woods. Thinking some animal had given him a slap across the nose for invading its privacy, no one thought any more of it.

Just outside the boundary of the lights coming from the house, a slight rustling came from the underbrush. Thinking perhaps a raccoon was there, Tommy's dad tossed several stones in the direction of the disturbance in hopes of scaring the furry intruder off. Max made several whimpering sounds and peered intently into the night.

Moments later, Tommy turned to see something resembling a small man running from one shadow to another. Leaping to his feet, he called out. "Dad, I just saw a little man run behind the fence!"

"You saw what?" came his dad's response. "It must have been a squirrel."
"No, no, it was a man!" said his son.
"How silly can you be?" laughed his mother. His dad chuckled to himself and

walked indoors shaking his head.
The moon emerged from behind the clouds, bathing the area in soft light. Max moved closer to Tommy as he sat back down. He was lying with his droopy jaw on his front paws. His sharp brown eyes searched knowingly into the darkness sensing something unusual was prowling among the shadows. As Tommy's mother stood up to enter the house, she also spotted something run across the lighted lawn, then disappear behind a tree.
"Oh my God!" she yelled. "It was a little man. George, come

out here!"

She told her husband what she had seen, but he just laughed, saying. "What's wrong with you two? Little men! Are you crazy or something?"

At that moment, two pairs of eyes appeared near the edge of the fence. As they slowly approached the area, the eyes vanished. Tommy's parents searched in one direction while he moved in among the trees. Several spots were well lighted from the moon shining down through the trees. As Tommy carefully looked around, he saw what appeared to be a little man standing in the moonlight. The little guy was visible long enough for the boy to later describe him.

It was like all the other descriptions. Gray clothing, long hair, a beard, puffy face, large eyes, and standing around a foot tall.

Tommy's dad only laughed again, but his mother believed him, as she had also seen the little fellow. Later his dad returned with a flashlight and searched, but found nothing out of the ordinary.

In the following days, Tommy searched the area of the sighting repeatedly, looking for evidence, but nothing was discovered to prove the story.

Perhaps the dog Max accidentally stumbled onto the little guy out for an evening walk, and got poked in the nose with a walking cane for venturing too close.

An adult and a boy both saw something altogether unusual. Was it truly a

little man standing in the moonlight, or a combination of shadows, light, and imagination?

QUINN

Chapter 4

The Picnic

S

teve Eastman and his wife Helen had promised to take their children Nancy, Tim, and Mike on a picnic in midJuly 1955.

The following Sunday all five piled into their truck and headed for the campground several miles away.
A table was found beneath some shady trees near the edge of the woods. As Mrs. Eastman laid out lunch, her husband sprayed a colony of troublesome ants nearby.
Before lunch was served, Mr. Eastman sat reading while his wife watched Nancy and Tim playing ball. Mike, the renegade of the family, was off by himself playing explorer. Helen noticed that some of the fruit was missing. Both children denied taking any. Thinking Mike was the culprit, she was angry that he would do such a thing before lunch.

As the children continued playing, Tim missed the ball and it rolled under the table and into the woods. While searching for the elusive ball, he parted some brush, and came face to face with a little man. In his arms was the missing fruit. Tim took another look and yelled, “Hey, that’s our fruit!”

The small figure resembled the well-known little folks often seen in the region. But this guy appeared much younger and did not have a beard. Before he turned and fled, Tim noticed that the man’s feet appeared much too large for his body. Also, he carried a small pack on his back. He wasn’t there long enough for Tim to describe him completely. All he said was, “His clothing looked odd.”

By this time, Nancy had arrived and she also claimed to have seen something on two legs running through the forest. As his sister ran to tell her parents, Tim gave chase, but he stumbled over some fallen limbs. He saw the little stranger disappearing among the shadows, running like the wind.

As Tim pulled himself up, his parents arrived. Upon hearing the story, all returned to the picnic area. By now, Mike had shown up with a wild tale about seeing a little man running through the woods, carrying an armload of fruit.

After lunch they all sat around discussing the odd incident. Steve found it amusing, but Helen felt uneasy about the area and said she wanted to leave.

A few hundred yards from the campsite was a road. Several days later, a story began circulating about some old gentleman seeing a little man run across the road while he was driving home. It occurred on the same Sunday near the picnic grounds. The old man also mentioned that the little fellow was

carrying fruit and dropped some as he ran across the road.

These little people apparently vary in size, from a foot to two feet tall. If this is correct, we have more than one species running about the hills. If not, their size has been incorrectly given by some. It’s also highly possible a few of these reports have been fabricated. But if only one tale is true, we have a small race of mysterious creatures quietly living among the hills, where almost anything can happen and usually does.

Chapter 5

Voices in the Forest

J

im McGill’s hobby was bird-watching and the sixty-sevenyear-old nature lover knew several good spots to watch his feathered friends. During June 1976, he drove west

from Monticello, New York, on Route 17, toward the small hamlet of Liberty. After traveling a few miles he parked beside the road.

After walking a few hundred yards through the woods, Jim discovered he had left his binoculars back in the truck. Feeling somewhat irritated about his stupidity, he returned to retrieve them. He hadn’t walked more than a few feet when he heard the sounds of voices, like young children quarreling. The voices were coming from a clearing. As he stopped near some trees, he noticed two small figures about two feet tall, about a hundred feet away. Both were dressed in dark green

and were engaged in a loud conversation in some foreign language.

The one who was the loudest was waving his arms frantically and pointing toward some nearby trees. The other seemed annoyed at what was being said. From Jim’s vantage point, it was difficult to make out their features. But each sported a beard and wore a wrinkled cap.

From his place of concealment Jim watched as the two carried on their disagreement. A while later, another little guy appeared in the clearing and joined the others. All three started talking at once and pushing each other around. To Jim it reminded him of the Three Stooges. A moment later all three walked off and were lost from view.

Jim followed at a safe distance but lost sight of them among the trees. Occasionally he would hear them, but within a few seconds only the sounds of the forest reached his ears.

* * *

As suspected, this wild encounter ruined his bird-watching. Several friends heard his amazing tale but only laughed and accused him of perhaps nipping a bottle while watching the birds. It seems nobody believes you until they themselves have a sighting.

It would be interesting to know what the three little men were quarreling over that summer day out among the trees. If they fight among themselves as we do, it suggests that they are human in some way.

The stories that come out of this area are indeed very thought-provoking. Do little beings watch us when we're out roaming the hills? Do little ones really exist in remote places

of this mysterious, rolling countryside?

Indians told settlers about the little people hundreds of years ago. These tales still linger today. Where there's smoke, there's fire.

Chapter 6

Little Girl Lost

O

ut of all the stories I have heard, this is my favorite. Sometimes back in the mid ’40s, a young girl by the name of Jill was lost in the haunting forests in the vicinity of the Catskill Mountains. This cute little girl of five and her parents were visiting her cousins one weekend. Her aunt’s stately home was located off the road and surrounded by thick woods on three sides. The children were often told never to wander into them because they could become lost.

Jill and her three cousins were playing out back. Their parents were having tea on the covered front porch, which extended the full length of the home.

A short while later, Jill left the others to chase some butterflies she had seen near the fishpond. The others hadn’t noticed her following them into the nearby forest. As suspected,

she ventured too far and became lost among the tall trees.

When it was discovered that she was missing, a search party was formed. Neighbors from the area joined, but no sign of Jill could be found. By late afternoon some forty-odd people were engaged in the search. They called but received no response. As dusk approached, the searchers returned. Both parents were frantic, but they knew nothing more could be done until morning. As the neighbors were preparing to leave, little Jill was seen emerging from the darkened woods. With a dirty face and a big smile, she came running to her mother.

This is Jill’s tale of how she was guided safely back: After following the butterflies she chased them in among the trees. She became lost and began searching for her aunt’s house. But this only caused her to venture deeper into the silent forest.

At one point while resting she could hear somebody calling her name. But they were far away. She tried walking toward the sound but became even more confused. Later, Jill came upon a small clearing and sat on a fallen tree. It was very still and the only sound was the breeze gently moving through the trees.

Remembering she had a candy bar in her pocket, she ate some of it. Looking up, Jill saw two small “dolls,” as she put it, standing beside a rock, looking at her. Both were dressed in shiny green clothing, and had small hats and wavy silver hair down to their shoulders.

She smiled and offered them some candy, but they didn’t respond to her friendly gesture. With tears in her eyes, Jill said. “Do you know where my aunt’s house is?”

Both nodded as if they understood and motioned her to

follow them.

By now dusk was approaching and the forest took on a menacing appearance. Long shadows began creeping over the county and the sky grew darker. Jill followed as her new-found friends led her through the forest. As it became dark, little balls of blinking colored light appeared around the tiny creatures as they moved along.

As Jill followed close behind, the little dolls moved faster and faster. She too was moving at a rapid pace through the woods. But didn’t understand how this was happening. Years later, she described the movement like one sees at the movies, when everything is speeded up.

Several moments later the dolls abruptly stopped and pointed toward the aunt’s home, some one hundred yards away. Jill saw a large group of people near the house. Turning to thank her little benefactors, she saw that they had vanished. Jill then saw her mother and ran to her.

Here indeed is a strange, fascinating tale of the little ones told by a girl of five. She called them little dolls—a rightful description for a young girl.

Who or what guided Jill back to safety? Also, what about the rapid speed and the odd blinking lights? I doubt a girl of her age could make up such a tall tale.

QUINN

Chapter 7

Come Fly With Me

J

ohn’s incredible venture into the world of the little people occurred back in 1933, when he was a young lad of ten. It happened while he and his family were picnicking on the grassy shores of a quiet lake located somewhere near the southern boundaries of the dark, haunting Catskills.

They arrived at the lake about eleven in the morning. While his mother and two sisters arranged the blankets near the shore, John and his dad carried the food baskets and other items from the car.

It was a warm summer day, and a light breeze was blowing across the water. Ominous dark clouds were gathering toward the north. All were hoping the approaching storm wouldn’t come their way. Within an hour it moved off toward the west and disappeared.

Afterwards, John sat near the edge of the lake, tossing small bits of rolled-up bread into the water. These were quickly consumed by the fish that swam nearby. His sisters were playing some distance away, and his parents sat beneath some shady trees, making plans for a trip to Kingston to visit relatives. Birds circled overhead and, sensing food, began landing nearby. John threw several pieces of bread in their direction, which were seized eagerly by the flock of hungry fowl.

As John stood up he heard the sound of fluttering wings. Turning, he saw a large bird behind the brush. It was only visible for a second or so before disappearing from view. He noticed that it looked rather strange.

Several moments later the bird appeared from its place of concealment. Immediately, John realized he had never seen a species like it before. It stood approximately eighteen inches high, was black in color, and had a long, pointed beak and very weird-looking eyes. He threw some bread toward it and this was quickly eaten. Another piece was tossed, but this time the

strange bird carried it behind the brush. As the odd-looking bird walked away, John noticed a small string dangling from both sides of its beak and across its long neck. To John, it resembled the reins of a horse.

Again the bird came forward and looked about. Not seeing any more goodies, it returned to the brush. A few seconds later it took flight. To his amazement, John spotted a little man sitting atop its back.

The small fellow was holding the reins and guiding the bird skyward. The bird had difficulty gaining altitude due to

the extra weight.

As the strange creature circled, John called out, “LOOK!” and pointed toward the sky. His parents turned, and the mysterious bird and its little passenger skimmed across the water, then shot upward, disappearing over the tree tops.

John ran and told them what he had seen but they only laughed. His father, however, did say that he saw something on the back of the bird, but couldn’t make out what it was. John’s sisters, playing some distance away, hadn’t noticed anything.

As the bird circled, John saw the little guy carrying a piece of bread under his arm. It appeared that the little fellow was waving in John’s direction, as if to thank him.

This strange encounter is still vividly implanted in John’s mind. After all these years, he is still certain that what he witnessed that summer day beside the lake really happened.

Can all this by a youngster’s imagination, or did something altogether out of this world happen that warm afternoon beside the lake?

Chapter 8

Hello, Hello, Hello!

I

received an interesting story from an elderly lady in her late 80s. The story is rather short but worth repeating. Her run-in with these elusive little creatures also took place

in the Monticello area.

This brief step into the unknown happened while she was a young girl of seven. At the time she was in bed with a slight cold. Her aunt was downstairs doing her daily chores.

After cutting out paper dolls and playing awhile she heard a sound off to one side. From the far corner of the room, a strange, tiny man appeared and ran swiftly across the floor, disappearing quickly behind the long curtains bordering the windows. As he ran happily along waving his arms, the little guy kept yelling “Hello, hello, hello!” He was dressed entirely in green.

She called out, “Come play with me,” but the mysterious little man had already vanished in the shadows.
The aunt called to her and asked, “Who are you talking to?”
“The little man that just ran behind the curtains,” was her reply.

Chapter 9

Footprints

in the Forest

O

ne day in July 1973, Bill Miller was outside taking his early morning stroll through the woods near his home, which was located near the headwaters of the Mongaup River. He enjoyed his daily hikes and would walk several miles before heading home.

On this particular morning, Bill was hiking through the forest west of his property. A cool breeze ruffled the leaves, and birds chirped and sang in the trees above. Bill had walked about a mile when he came upon a small area devoid of vegetation. It had rained slightly during the night and the earth within the clearing was still moist. Looking closer, Bill spotted

what appeared to be a number of small, human-like footprints about two inches in length, crossing the patch of wet ground. Most were about a quarter of an inch deep, but several farther out were much deeper and partly filled with water.

Bill had heard rumors concerning the alleged little people of the valley, but shrugged off the stories as folktales. Smiling to himself over the possibility that there might be some truth to the legends, he hurried home to fetch his camera and photograph the mysterious little footprints.

On his return, Bill couldn’t locate the spot. After spending an hour searching he was unable to find it. He abandoned the hunt and returned home quite discouraged.

Several days later while again hiking in the same vicinity, Bill came upon the spot. But the footprints had long since eroded away. It’s strange that he couldn’t relocate the area after returning with his camera. Perhaps the little

ones didn’t want him taking pictures of their prints, and clouded his mind to prevent him from doing so. Or maybe he became confused during the excitement and returned to a different area.

Numerous tales occasionally filter out of these mysterious hills, and this story is only one of many.

Chapter 10

The Rescue

T

his little gem allegedly occurred during 1980, and takes place farther north among the Adirondacks. Don was hiking one of the many picturesque trails that

wind through these rolling hills. Noticing his canteen was low, he left the trail and headed toward the river some fifty yards away.

After filling the canteen Don removed his boots and sat beside the river, dangling his warm feet in the cool water. It was mid-summer and the weather was perfect for some enjoyable time in the great outdoors. The only sound to greet his ears was nature's symphony of gurgling water and singing birds.

After drying his feet, Don sat and put his boots on. At that moment he heard a sound like a young child calling out in dis

tress. Glancing around, he didn't see anyone. Again came the small voice. Reaching for his binoculars, Don scanned the countryside, but still nothing could be seen.

From upriver he again heard the call. Looking in that direction, Don spotted what appeared to be a small child hanging onto some rocks about five feet out in the swiftly-moving waters.

Bringing up his field glasses, he was surprised at the sight that met his eyes. The little person floundering about in the river resembled an adult male several feet tall. His wet hair and long beard were plastered to his tiny round face. Lowering the glasses, Don rubbed his eyes and looked again. Sure enough, it was a little man.

From the corner of his eye, Don spotted something moving fast through the brush, coming in his direction. A second later, another little guy came

running past, heading downstream. He was traveling extremely fast for his small size. The little fellow shot past like a bullet. Turning, Don saw him climb a narrow tree limb near the river's edge. It bent from his weight until he was over the water.

The guy bobbing about in the river let go and came floating by, yelling at the top of his lungs with arms outstretched. His companion held on to the tree with both feet and one hand, while extending the other toward his rapidly approaching friend. As the floundering little fellow drifted under him, the little man grabbed his arm and held tight as he slid back down the tree. Both reached safety and fell ex hausted onto the ground. The one who was rescued resembled a drowned rat as he lay there coughing up water.

While all this was happening, Don stood rooted to the spot, watching this amazing event unfold before him. When the two picked themselves up, he noticed that the one from the river was missing his hat. As they left, he was chattering up a storm. It seemed like he was blaming the other for his near-fatal encounter with the turbulent waters.

As the two little guys disappeared among the surrounding trees, Don sat to regain his composure. He found it difficult to believe what had just occurred.

On his way back down the trail, he met three other hikers. They must have seen a strange look on his face because they asked if anything was wrong. He told them what he had just witnessed, but doubted that they believed him.

While this water rescue was happening, neither of the little guys seemed to notice Don.
In his letter to me, Don stated that it was all true and occurred exactly as it appears here: "Nobody—family, friends, or psychiatrist—will ever convince me otherwise."

Chapter 11

Flowers on the Hill

I

n the spring of 1973, Michael and Sally Ellsworth were out on a Sunday drive through the back country near the community of Liberty, New York. As he was traveling along a lonely road, Michael's car had

a flat. While he was in the process of changing the tire, Sally strolled off taking in the surrounding scenery. A spring shower had passed earlier and the air was still fresh with nature's aroma.

As she was standing beside a hill covered with wild flowers she suddenly heard what appeared to be tiny sounds of giggling and laughter. It was coming from the direction of some flowers about twenty feet away. Looking up, she spotted some movement near one corner of the scattered flowers. Thinking it might be birds feeding among the growth, she

started toward the car, where Michael was just placing the flat tire in the luggage compartment.

Again came the strange giggling, but to Sally it just didn't sound like birds. She gazed intently at the spot where the unusual sounds were coming from, in hopes of seeing what was making them. To her astonishment, a tiny feminine face appeared from under the flowers, then quickly vanished from view. This was followed by more giggling and laughter. Startled by what she had seen, Sally called to Michael to come over. As he approached, Sally spotted what resembled a little hand moving beneath the leaves.

Again calling to Michael, she said, "Come quickly. You must see this." She then pointed toward the flowers and told him what she had seen. Michael burst into laughter, but this was short-lived. As they stood looking up the hill, three small creatures, resembling two tiny girls and a boy, emerged from the flowers and were seen scrambling up the hill through the grass. All three were less than a foot in height. They paused momentarily before disappearing

into the brush at the crest of the hill.

Both husband and wife have no doubt in their minds what they saw that spring afternoon. Could imagination have played a hand in it? “No way,” say Sally and Michael. They were little people and not small animals.

R. QUINN

Chapter 12

He Was Very Ugly

M

rs. Anne Pratt, of Penbroke, Florida, told me a very interesting tale. Anne lived in Monticello, New York, up until 1976. Her story also occurred in

August, but six years after my encounter. Her event took placed in the Swinging Bridge region just south of Mongaup Valley.

One of Anne's aunts was getting ready to leave with her six-year-old son for a visit and dinner with her mother. The family was holding a gathering for some special occasion that afternoon. As they were about to leave, she couldn't persuade the boy to get into the car. He kept running toward the nearby woods, pointing and saying that he wanted to play with his friend, the little man. Of course she didn't believe him, but

since he insisted on showing her his new-found playmate, she obliged and followed him into the woods.

To her astonishment, just on the edge of a clearing stood a little man. He was the ugliest little creature she had ever seen. The being stood about two and a half feet tall. He seemed to be trying to warn her about something.

Later, when she related the story to the family, Anne always wondered if her aunt thought she might be losing her mind. Her sisters certainly thought so.

They said she drove up fast, jumped out all excited, and began talking about this ugly little man she had just seen near her cottage. She was quite shaken by the incident, but wasn't frightened of him. No other description was given, other than that he was one ugly-looking critter.

Naturally, the family didn't believe her and thought she had persuaded the boy to go along with the tale. However, both firmly stuck to their story throughout the years.

On her return that evening, she had a car accident in which she was seriously injured. Fortunately, nothing happened to her son. While she was in the hospital recovering, she kept saying the little man she had seen was right, and she should have paid more attention to his warning not to go. This event remained with her all her life.

At first Anne thought her aunt's sighting occurred in the same area as mine. Later she learned it happened in the Swinging Bridge vicinity. She believes the cottage once owned by

her aunt burned down long ago. The road has been transformed into a busy highway.

If any of the alleged little folks were still living in the nearby forest, she doubts they survived the drastic changes that have occurred over the years. I guess they packed up, bag and baggage, and moved farther back into the forest.

QUINN

Chapter 13

Hey in There

A

s a teenager Mike Dunlap loved camping with his parents, and would always look forward to the arrival of summer. He was bright and enjoyed the wonders of

nature. He especially loved exploring the woods of upstate New York.

During several days of camping beside the picturesque Delaware River, young Mike ventured off while his parents fished. This happened in early 1939.

Mike knew how easy one could become lost, so he stayed within the sound of the river. His folks didn't worry as their young adventurer knew the ways of the forest rather well.

As he hiked happily along, the fir trees filled the air with their sweet fragrance. Mike explored every interesting place

he came upon and wondered what adventures he'd uncover during the day.

By ten that morning, Mike guessed he had hiked about three miles from camp. The sound of the river could still be heard toward the north. His attention was drawn toward a group of large rocks. They seemed to tug on his sleeves. As he approached them, Mike heard a sound like a door closing. Rounding the largest boulder, he spotted something that stopped him in his tracks.

There before him was a strange, wooden door built into the face of the rocks. It measured about eighteen inches high by a foot wide. It had a doorknob, a keyhole, and two small, interesting hinges. Without giving it a second thought, Mike found himself knocking on the door. From inside came a sound like little voices whispering. Taking hold of the doorknob, Mike tried opening it but found it locked.

Puzzled by his strange discovery, Mike moved off and hid among the trees. He wanted to see if anyone came out. For almost an hour he watched the entrance. He felt some fear but curiosity overrode it.

All of a sudden the door slowly opened. A moment later, to his surprise, a little face peeked out from behind the door and looked curiously around. The little creature was human in appearance. He wore a sloppy brown hat, had a gray beard, and very large expressive eyes. All at once the door slammed shut with such force it shook the very ground

Still frightened, Mike crept up and placed his ear against the door. No sound could be heard from within. After hesitating for a moment, Mike again knocked on the door and said,

“Hey in there! Come out, I won’t hurt ya.” As he knocked again, several sparks leaped from the door, giving him a mild shock. Mike took this as a warning to stay away.

Mike called out, “Hey, you don’t have to act like that. I’m not here to hurt anyone.” After taking one last look, Mike returned to camp. Upon arriving he told his parents the entire story. They knew he wasn’t a teller of tall tales, but thought he had fallen asleep and dreamed the whole thing.

The next morning, Mike’s father accompanied him back to the location. Mike had some difficulty finding it but soon came upon the rock outcropping.

Everything was there but the little door. It had mysteriously vanished. Looking closer they spotted a small, worn trail leading from the rock face. His dad said it could have been made by some animal.

As Mike grew older he would occasionally visit the site, but he never saw the strange door again. Was it a secret entrance into the underground world of the little people? When Mike told me this tale there was a sound of truthfulness to his voice. He insisted every word was true, but nobody believed him. So be it.

The little ones probably feared Mike would return with others, and magically

made the door disappear. How they produced that mild shock remains a mystery. I guess these little rascals can be rather hostile when they wish to be —especially if you accidentally discover their place of residence.

Chapter 14

The Phantom Forest

T
his next story stretches the imagination to its limits, but is worth telling.

Ned Grimm occasionally ventured into the forests around his home for long hikes. Knowing the region quite well, he had no need for a map. During these enjoyable trips, Ned took many pictures.

On June 29, 1977, Ned would experience a day like no other. Unbeknownst to him, he would wander into a mysterious land—perhaps the hidden world of those mischievous little people. After traveling along a twisting, overgrown dirt road near the western boundaries of the Catskills, Ned parked his truck and headed into the nearby woods.

About a hundred yards into the forest, Ned felt a strange, tingling sensation throughout his body as he walked near a large rock formation. This feeling lasted only a few seconds.

As Ned hiked along he noticed that the surrounding country looked somewhat different from the way he remembered it. The sky was clear, but just moments before it had been overcast. It also had an odd green tinge to it. Moving among the tall trees, he spotted some unfamiliar vegetation. The country was more open. Farther on, he came upon some high granite cliffs where none should have been. A narrow, twisting canyon cut back into them. Thinking he was lost, Ned hiked slowly up the rocky bed of this mysterious canyon.

After walking for several minutes, Ned heard strange music coming from around the next bend. He crept along, hugging the right wall, and peered around the corner. There, sitting atop some large boulders near a small waterfall were four little men playing haunting music on flutes. Beside the falls, another little guy was engaged in filling a jug with water.

Ned blinked several times and looked again. They were still there. Realizing he had his camera, Ned took several pictures from his place of concealment. A moment later the other fellow returned with the jug and all the little people retreated up the canyon and out of sight.

Ned retraced his steps back across the country, knowing he had positive proof of what he witnessed. After walking for around an hour, he spotted his car through the trees. At that moment, Ned again felt the odd tingling. He turned and the strange country was gone. The surrounding area again looked familiar and the sky was overcast.

He estimated he had been gone perhaps three hours, but by his watch only thirty minutes had elapsed since leaving the car. Knowing something mighty weird had occurred, Ned drove home feeling shaken. Of course his wife didn't believe a word of his wild tale.

When the film was developed, all the pictures came out except the ones showing the little men. These were only a conglomerate of out-of-focus shadows, which had a green tinge.

Had Ned accidentally stepped into another dimension when he experienced that tingling feeling? He was gone three hours, but in our time it was only half an hour.

The country was similar to ours except for several differences: The strange vegetation, open country, clear sky, and high cliffs where none should be. Even pictures taken in the "phantom forest" wouldn't register on film. If all this is true, something odd had been going on in and around the mountains of New York for hundreds of years.

I have a wild theory that might explain all these stories. It was gathered from legends, research, speculation, and lots of fantasy thrown in. As wild as it might sound, it could very well be the answer to this complex question surrounding the possible existence and strange power of these elusive little beings. It could also answer some of the other strange happenings known to have occurred in this enchanting country. That will be my last story.

Chapter 15

The Egg Culprits

I

t was a cool fall day back in 1949 when Mr. Hobson stepped from his back door and headed toward the chicken coop some forty yards away. The sun was just poking its fiery

face over the low hills, and clouds were scattered across the blue sky.

As he approached, Mr. Hobson heard a loud commotion coming from within the coop as if something was frightening his chickens. Opening the door he saw that the chickens were quite disturbed. Feathers and dust could be seen drifting about the floor. Thinking that some of his poultry stock had had a fight over something, he gathered the eggs and returned to the house. He told his wife about the small ruckus and she suggested it might have been caused by some animal venturing too close to the coop. Nothing more was mentioned about the incident.

In the following days they noticed a slight decrease in the eggs produced by their twenty-odd hens. It was thought that a rodent or something was making off with them. Mr. Hobson examined the structure of the coop and noticed one of the wall boards was loose near the bottom. Obtaining several rocks he wedged these against the board, securing it in place.

A few days later, to his amazement, he found these rocks had been moved. Thinking some animal was the culprit, he set a number of traps near the coop but nothing was caught.

About a week later, Mr. Hobson entered the chicken coop and froze in fear. There were two little men, a foot or so high, running toward the loose board. Both carried two eggs in their arms. As the second little guy reached the opening he accidentally dropped an egg, cracking it. Both were out and gone in seconds.

Old man Hobson ran toward the house, shouting for his wife. Gasping for

breath he blurted out what had happened. Thinking her husband had lost his mind, she laid him down. He had a wild expression, and his eyes bulged from their sockets. He kept repeating the wild story about seeing two little men running off with his eggs. After calmness was restored, both approached the coop. There was a cracked egg on the ground, but no sign of the little culprits.

This story came from their daughter.

Chapter 16

Walking Home

T

his weird encounter happened during the winter of 1929, much earlier than most stories I have heard over the years. This bizarre incident occurred in the Lackawack area, which is located south of the Roundout Reservoir in New York.

Bud Landis, as we'll call him, was walking home one fall night after visiting a friend who lived a mile away. A full moon was just rising over the hills, and a slight chill filled the evening air. As the moon became fully exposed, its illumination bathed the surrounding countryside in soft light.

As Bud strolled along, he noticed a strange stillness in the air. An eerie silence filled the night. As he walked briskly down the dirt road, the surrounding woods seemed to close in from all directions. Glancing to his left, Bud saw a weird light coming from among the trees. It seemed to pulsate and was near the ground.

Thinking the moon might be reflecting off something shiny, Bud continued on. Ultimately curiosity got the best of him. He stepped off the road and moved in among the trees. After stumbling through the thick underbrush for some ten yards, Bud came upon a sight that froze him in his tracks. Before him was a dome-shaped, yellow-green, translucent light. It measured about four feet across and some eighteen inches high. Bud thought perhaps the phenomenon might have been caused by some unknown fungus growing within the radius of the circle. He had once read something about glowing swamp gas.

He examined the earth beneath but found nothing unusual. Suddenly the glow intensified, and Bud dived for cover behind the brush. From his place of concealment he saw two small men a foot high slowly materialize within the light. Both resembled the well-known little folks seen so often in the Catskills.

They seemed to sense his presence and looked directly at him. Bud jumped backwards, stumbling over his own feet and fell. A second later, both little guys leaped back within the glow, and they and the light suddenly vanished.

Bud was quite shaken by the weird experience and sat for a while to regain his thoughts before leaving. However, before heading home he placed several rocks on the spot, marking the location.

The next morning he returned but found nothing out of

the ordinary. A week later he again returned to the site. This time he discovered the grass was slowly dying where the glow had been seen. Bud kept his story a secret, because he held a respectable position in the community and didn't want to be labeled a nut among his friends.

The next idea might sound foolish and far-out, but anything is possible in this world. What Bud witnessed that chilly night might have been how these little beings enter our world.

QUINN

Chapter 17

Incident at Neversink

T
his tale parallels a strange sighting that occurred in the state of Washington during the mid 1950s.

One morning, Dave was hiking along the shores of Neversink Reservoir. The waters lapped lazily at his feet, and he felt a cool breeze coming across the lake. It was mid-autumn and the leaves had already turned color.

After living in the area for some seventeen years, Dave knew the country well. From his vantage point he could see Peekamoose and Slide Mountains clearly outlined against the morning sky.

After walking for a while he noticed a large fog bank hanging over the water. Farther on, Dave came onto a small bridge extending out into the heavy mist. The bridge was perhaps three feet wide with hand railings. The odd structure looked as though it were made of brass. Unfamiliar geometric designs covered the railing of the bizarre causeway. With his curiosity aroused, Dave walked across and into the swirling fog. A moment later he reached the opposite end and found himself on a small island, covering about six acres.

The entire landscape was encircled by the odd mist. Strange animals were seen roaming the island's terrain, and odd-looking trees grew nearby. Off toward his left some forty yards, three men could be seen near the shore. All were gazing toward the opposite bank of the lake, which was faintly visible through the shifting mist. They were around three feet tall, had white robes, and silky hair flowing down their backs. All three had beards. The one in the center carried an object, but Dave couldn't make out what it was.

One turned, looking directly at Dave, but acted as though he didn't notice him. Seconds later they walked off toward the trees. Dave felt uneasy and moved back across the bridge. As he reached the other side, he turned to see both the bridge and the mist slowly disappear. As the fog broke he saw Peekamoose and Slide Mountains off in the distance. Between the two was

another mountain. It was fairly tall and came to a point at the summit. A few clouds were clinging to its steep sides. As everything vanished, so did the mysterious island, along with the strange mountain.

Returning home, Dave asked several neighbors if they had

witnessed anything unusual near the lake. Only one saw the fog and something moving within the center of it.

Once again we have a lone hiker who saw something mystifying. Did Dave unknowingly step into another parallel universe that accidentally slid over into ours?

While walking the shores of Lake Washington, a doctor also came upon an odd-looking bridge extending out into the early morning mist hovering over the waters. He also crossed and came to an unknown island. It was inhabited with strange animals and a lone, elderly man. He was seen sitting on rocks looking out across the lake. It slowly vanished as the mist lifted.

The doctor asked several neighbors if they had noticed anything unusual out on the lake that morning. One answered, yes, he had seen a small island disappear through the mist. Two days later, his neighbor denied ever seeing anything. I found this rather odd.

Perhaps we haven’t evolved far enough to understand these unexplainable little tricks of nature that don’t fit nicely into our everyday routines.

What if Dave hadn’t made it off the island before it vanished? Would he have been listed as just another missing person? If so, where would Dave be today?

Chapter 18

The Uninvited Guest

J

ack McGill owned a small farm in Delaware County, New York. On it were several cows and other farm animals. Jack was in his early seventies and always cheerful. His wife

Ruth had passed away three years earlier, but Jack stayed on the old homestead because it was filled with pleasant memories.

One chilly morning as dawn broke over the hills, he headed for the barn to milk the cows. As he was undertaking this daily ritual some hay floated down from the loft above. Thinking it was caused by some pesky rodents, he threw an old bolt in that direction.

Several moments later, Jack happened to glance up and caught sight of something near the edge of the loft. The object seemed too large for a rat, so he went to investigate. He found no animals but there were a few crabapples in one corner.

Believing some rodent had carried them there, Jack tossed them out the open window and returned to his chores.

The following morning, Jack again heard rustling in the loft. He had placed traps throughout the barn but nothing was caught.

That evening he returned with flashlight in hand and quietly entered. He was hoping to see where the pesky varmints were nesting. A half-moon was shining through the open loft window. Its yellow glow filled the old barn.

As he sat within the shadows, Jack thought of his wife and the happy moments they had shared. It filled him with sadness as he reminisced about the earlier days.

Suddenly, Jack was brought back to reality by sounds from above. Picking up a club he crept toward the ladder that led to the dusty loft. He silently climbed up and peeked over the edge. In the glow of the moon, Jack spotted something silhouetted against the sky. Aiming his flashlight toward the object, he switched it on. To his surprise, there before him was a little man some two feet high with a startled look upon his face. Jack had a good look before the figure leaped through the window.

Stumbling toward the window, Jack looked out. Far below, running across the open pasture and into the trees, was the little guy. How he managed to survive the twenty-foot drop, Jack couldn't imagine.

Later Jack examined the area where the little being was seen. He found some fruit and a small mustard jar filled with water. It looked as though the little guy was using the loft as his sleeping quarters.

Somewhat bewildered, he returned to the house. Jack began to feel sorry about scaring the little fellow off. He meant no harm and was only using Jack’s barn for shelter.

Thinking he might return, Jack left some food and a small bottle of milk in the loft. It remained for three days. On the fourth, Jack found it missing. Hoping he could perhaps contact his small visitor, he left other gifts throughout the weeks.

One afternoon, Jack happened to spot the little guy entering the barn. He stepped outside and stood beneath some trees and waited. Sure enough, he was seen emerging from the barn, carrying the food. As the little fellow reached the fence, he turned and waved in Jack’s direction. Jack returned the friendly gesture as the small figure disappeared into the forest.

The following day Jack found two feathers where the gifts had been. They were formed like the letter T. Was this the little man’s way of thanking Jack for his kindness?

Jack never saw the little guest again. Maybe he was just passing through the

country and used the old barn for a stopover. Jack often wondered where the guy came from and where he was going.

Chapter 19

The Strange Cavern

S

ometime during the early 1800s, a frontiersman known only as Patrick was hunting several miles south of his cabin in the extreme northern boundaries of the Catskill

Mountains.

Around noon a vicious storm came barreling in. Rain came down in torrents and lightning danced across the darkened sky. Pat ran from tree to tree in search of shelter. As he peered through the driving rain, he spotted a rock overhang about fifty yards off. Once inside he realized that it was a cave. At the rear was a small passageway that led downward.

Knowing he might be there for a while, Pat decided to explore the interior. He made a crude torch from dry twigs found inside the entrance. When this was finished he moved

slowly down the narrow tunnel. After walking about a hundred feet, Pat noticed there was more light in the tunnel than the small torch would produce. When the flame from his torch flickered out, he was amazed at what he saw. The walls and ceiling gave off a soft, greenish glow. It seemed to be coming from an algae growing on the surface.

Bewildered by the strange light, Pat scraped several samples from the wall. It appeared to be a minute, fern-like growth, which produced its own cool light.

He found himself in a large chamber about twenty by forty feet in size. Smaller tunnels extended in various directions from the main room. Large pillars were at each corner, and rocks were scattered on the floor.

As the violent storm raged on, Pat decided to wait it out in the mysterious cave. All at once, he heard voices approaching from one of the other

passageways. Glancing around, Pat dived behind one of the pillars. To his surprise, dozens of little men and women, each about two feet tall, began entering the room. All were dressed in brown and green clothing.

They were all talking at once in a language he couldn't understand. He crouched close to the floor and tried to hide the best he could. Only the large pillar separated him from the increasing crowd. He thought it odd that they hadn't seen him.

As he looked up he was astonished to see tables and chairs. He knew they hadn't been there earlier. On the tables were goblets of wine and piles of bread and fruit. A moment later, music filled the cavern, and the little ones began dancing. The shouting continued until it accelerated into a wild frenzy. Pat estimated there were about sixty little people running about

raising hell. The noise they made echoed throughout the room.

As the storm continued, so did the wild party. Pat clasped his hands over his ears to keep out the deafening racket they were making. All at once, everything suddenly came to a halt. Pat looked up slowly and was surprised to see everything gone—the little ones, music, tables, everything. Only silence filled the chamber. Pat crept out and looked around. There was no evidence of their ever having been there. They seemed to have vanished all at once. Expecting the wild crowd might return, Pat headed for the entrance.

As he started to leave the den of horrors, his attention was drawn toward one wall. Protruding from it was a single gold nugget the size of a walnut. With his knife, Pat pried the gleaming nugget from its resting place. Outside, the storm had passed. He could see the tail end moving across the hills like some hideous monster, spitting sparks and growling as it made its way southward.

The following day Pat returned, but he couldn't find the cave. The overhang was there but not the entrance. He was hoping to find more gold—that is, if the little wild devils weren't around throwing another party. Search as he might, the entrance was never found again.

Weeks later Pat told his story to anyone that would listen. He even displayed

the gold nugget as proof, but they just laughed at his fantastic tale of little people and the strange underground cave with its glowing walls. Pat disappeared and was never seen again.

Perhaps the little ones discovered their gold was missing. Realizing some outsider had stumbled onto their secret domain, they magically sealed the entrance.

Chapter 20

The Old House

J

eff was a dedicated hunter and outdoorsman who spent a great amount of time roaming the dark hills of northern New York. Most of the time his close friend Rick

would accompany him on these adventurous trips. This time however, Rick was down with the flu, so Jeff decided to go hunting alone.

He left before dawn and entered a very remote area. Finding deer tracks beside a small brook, Jeff followed them until they were lost among the pine needles. As he turned to leave, he noticed an old, run-down house near the clearing. An overgrown road was also seen nearby.

Jeff entered the abandoned home, which was in the last stages of collapse. The three rooms were empty except for sev

eral wooden boxes, a broken chair, and a table. Other bits of debris were scattered about.

After searching and finding nothing of value, Jeff decided to sit by the doorway and have some coffee before heading out. As he drank from his thermos, the wind blew through the open building, making whistling sounds. The old beams creaked overhead. By the looks of the place it hadn't been occupied for many years.

The old wooden floor was rotted and large holes were scattered throughout the rooms. As Jeff sipped his coffee, he heard a sound behind him, like something small running across the floor. Turning, he spotted a dark, tiny figure disappearing into the shadows. Thinking he had disturbed some animal using the residence for shelter, he thought no more about it.

After packing his things away, Jeff again spotted something dart out the rear door. Stepping toward a window he saw something resembling a little man,

perhaps fifteen inches tall, running into the surrounding brush. His back was toward Jeff, so he couldn't see its features. It was definitely a small man, dressed in shabby clothing. He was carrying something but Jeff was unable to see what it was. The little fellow was only visible for several seconds before vanishing from view.

Jeff hurried outside and ran toward the brush. Stopping, he couldn't see anything, but there were sounds of movement. Returning to the house, Jeff began examining the holes in the floor. One revealed quite a surprise.

The old house was built on concrete blocks, and there was a space below about a foot in height. Small boards,

undoubtedly taken from the house, were built up on four sides, forming a small enclosure or room. The earth beneath was packed solid from constant use. In one corner was a large pile of rags arranged on a board above the ground. A bed perhaps? An old tin cup, minus its handle, was full of water. This stood beside a flat rock, which could have been used as a table or chair.

To Jeff it resembled a crude living quarters. Knowing a little about the tales of these little ones, he guessed he had stumbled upon one of their residences and scared the occupant off. Not wanting to be responsible for evicting the little man from his humble home, Jeff retreated outside. From his vantage point near the trees, he could see both doors. He was hoping to spot the small guy if he returned. When an hour elapsed and nothing was seen, Jeff decided to leave. He felt there was a strong possibility that the little guy was also watching from among the trees, waiting patiently for his unwelcome intruder to depart.

Jeff never told anyone the location of the old house. I guess he didn't want snoopers going there and disturbing the little man.

Chapter 21

The River’s Edge

T

hat day back in 1973 began like any other summer morning for Peter Winters as he strolled along the banks of the Mongaup River.

It was a warm day and not a cloud was seen above. Pete had heard the stories of little people who had been seen running about the countryside. To him they were folk tales passed down over the years by superstitious country folk.

The region Pete was walking through was thick with brush. As he paused to find a path through the barricade of greenery blocking his way, he spotted movement near the river a short distance away. Believing it might be an animal coming for a drink, he inched forward quietly for a better view. As he peered from behind the trees, Pete couldn’t believe his eyes. About

twenty feet away sitting atop some rocks was a small, bearded man perhaps two feet tall. A sloppy hat covered his ears, and his clothing was light brown. He sat there like he didn’t have a care in the world, casting a fishing line into a small pool several feet away. Several small fish he had caught were lying nearby. Pete knelt transfixed at the unbelievable sight before him. He knew what he was seeing, but his mind couldn’t accept it. The poor guy was beside himself.

“I just can’t believe this, I just can’t,” Pete muttered. Motionless and almost unable to breathe, he drank in every detail of the scene.

There before him was living proof of the existence of these little people. Various ideas raced through his mind. Could he lunge forward and attempt to capture the being? Should he appear slowly and try to communicate with the strange fellow? Pete decided to stand up slowly and let his presence be known, and see what happened. At that moment the little fellow sensed something and turned. Their eyes met briefly before the little man leaped to

his feet with a startled expression and ran swiftly away, jumping over several rocks before vanishing into the woods. In doing so, he dropped his small fishing pole. Afterwards, Pete stood there with knees shaking and heart pounding. He retrieved the fishing pole because he knew it was physical evidence of his strange encounter, but once again, nobody believed him.

After taking several pictures of the pole, he returned it to where it was found. Several days later, Pete discovered it was gone.

It will be up to the reader to decide the truth of this remark

able tale. I did see a copy of the picture of the small fishing pole.

Chapter 22

One Wild Ride

M

ost sightings of these little creatures have been witnessed by one individual. This bizarre story deals with two people who shared a weird experience on

Highway 28, which winds through—you guessed it—those mysterious Catskills.

The incident happened somewhere between the sleepy community of Phoenicia and its neighbor Allaben. It occurred sometime during the mid-1960s around ten at night.

Joe and Linda, both in their mid-fifties, were returning from a visit with their daughter, who lived near Kingston, New York. As they sped along the car's headlights cut a narrow pass through the dark, lonely night. A moment later a loud thud was heard on the car's roof. Thinking perhaps a small branch had fallen and bounced off, they continued on.

About a mile later they again heard several more light thuds. Pulling to the side of the road, Joe picked up his flashlight and he and Linda climbed from their car. When the beam was flashed onto the roof, they saw a little man about three feet tall lying spread-eagled across the top. He was holding on for dear life and his expression was one of sheer terror.

Linda screamed and jumped backward. Joe stood looking at the creature in amazement. The little fellow then jumped to his feet, looked around wildly, and leaped from the car, landing several feet from Linda. The little one stumbled some before regaining his balance. He then ran off with a slight limp, disappearing into the trees bordering the road.

Aiming his light toward the woods, Joe saw him emerge from the forest some sixty feet away. He then hobbled up the road until lost from view.

Joe and Linda looked at each other in complete silence, then burst into laughter. They had heard some strange tales about the area, but never thought they'd ever see one of those little folks themselves.

While checking the car's roof the following morning, Joe noticed a slight dent in the center.
How did the little guy manage to land on the roof of a moving car?
Regardless of how it occurred, that little stranger had one hell of a ride. I can imagine how he felt, hanging onto a moving object, flying down the dark road in the dead of night.
When the little rascal arrived home, I bet he had one wild tale to tell his companions. I can see them shaking their heads in disbelief. Those that have seen the little ones receive the same reaction when they tell their stories.

 I wonder what Joe told his insurance company.

Chapter 23

The Enchantment

R

uth Wheeler loved the outdoors and hiking the picturesque forests that dominate upstate New York. One summer, many years ago, she was out enjoying this

pleasant activity somewhere in the vicinity north of Swan Lake.

The morning she left, the weather was warm and there wasn't a cloud to be seen. After hiking several miles, Ruth checked her map and decided to cut across the country to another trail about two miles north. This would bring her full circle back to her car where both trails met.

About half a mile into the woods she came upon a natural spring among the trees. She was a little thirsty, so she drank her fill, then topped off her canteen. Before moving on, Ruth marked the approximate location of the spring on her map.

A short while later she came to a small opening and spot

ted a single tree growing at the center. Ruth knew most of the trees in the region, but this one was unfamiliar. It stood about fifteen feet tall and its texture was very smooth, similar to that of the Madrona tree. Its leaves were long, narrow, and light green. Small yellow blossoms grew throughout and these gave off a peculiar sweet fragrance that filled the air.

A large number of petals were scattered about the base of the odd tree. Afterwards, Ruth searched the immediate area but couldn't locate another tree resembling it. She found it rather odd.

Deciding to have lunch before moving on, she removed her pack and relaxed in the shade of the strange tree. A short while later, Ruth heard strange sounds coming from the woods nearby, like dozens of tiny voices all talking

at once. Looking about she expected to see a flock of chattering birds among the branches. But none were seen. Soon the mysterious sounds faded away.

Weary from the heat and the hike, Ruth became drowsy. The sweet scent of the blossoms made her feel very relaxed. She closed her eyes and soon fell into a deep sleep.

While in this state, Ruth had a dream. In it she saw herself sleeping beneath the tree. All at once dozens of little people about a foot tall began emerging from the forest. They were all talking at once in tiny voices. About half were females of different ages. Several looked her over and touched her legs then jumped back giggling.

Afterward, they all began gathering the fallen petals from the ground. When this was accomplished, the little ones again retreated into the surrounding forest.

When Ruth awoke, she remembered the dream vividly. Glancing at her watch, she noticed she had been asleep almost half an hour. The strange fragrance still lingered, but its intensity had diminished slightly. Looking around, Ruth saw the petals from beneath the tree were gone. In her dream she had witnessed the little group gathering them. Once again she heard the tiny voices among the trees and became frightened. Gathering her things, she fled the scene.

That evening Ruth told her friends of her strange experience. All listened, but insisted it must have been a dream. None, however, could explain the unusual tree.

If only Ruth had had the presence of mind to have carried some of the petals home! If the old tree did exist, and was very rare, I'm sure the petals would have driven a botanist crazy.

The following weekend, Ruth made another trip to the secluded area. She found the spring, but try as she might, that mysterious tree was never seen again. Ruth insisted it's somewhere hidden out among the hills. She felt

foolish about not taking a picture of it, because she had her camera.

What did Ruth accidentally discover that summer day? A magical meeting place for our little friends? Did the strange fragrance put her into a semi-hypnotic state in which she witnessed the little ones gathering their petals? If this odd tree does exist, perhaps the chemical properties of the blossoms induce hallucinations. If the fragrance is carried by the wind, it could explain some of the strange happenings and sightings of the little people. But, that’s just another way-out theory.

HE'S UP THERE IN THE TREE.

Chapter 24

The Campers

B

ob and Helen Pepper enjoyed camping with their close friends Tom and Susan Hodgson. They were all in their early thirties and would camp whenever possible during the summer.

Bob had discovered a hidden place within the woods of Ulster County. The site was a clearing beside a small mountain stream that trickled through the forest. Downstream about a mile was a campground. But most of the time it was crowded with noisy weekend campers, yelling kids, and loud radios. Their secret location was reached by winding their truck through the trees.

It was so quiet that one would think they had gone deaf if it wasn't for the sound of the running water rippling peacefully over the rocks.

They left early, arriving at the site within the hour. As the women went about arranging camp, the men set up tents beneath the trees. That evening they sat around discussing various things by the campfire. The smoke circled upward and drifted off over the trees. Susan remarked on how quiet it was. Not a breeze or a bird call broke the silence. Above them, the stars sparkled against a black velvet sky.

Tom was off among the trees near the camp toilet. Hearing a movement from above, he looked up and then turned on his flashlight. He saw something move among the branches. He then moved to a better location and pointed the light toward the sounds. To his surprise, Tom saw a little figure, like a small man sitting among the leaves looking down toward him.

Tom laughed and returned to camp. "Okay," he said, "who is the jokester?"
They all looked up and Helen asked. "What do you mean?"
"One of you put a doll dressed as a leprechaun in that tree. Somebody here is pulling a string to make it move."
The other three followed Tom, acting confused. Stopping beneath the tree,

Tom pointed up with the flashlight. “That’s what I’m talking about,” he said with a smile. The beam fell upon the small figure sitting some ten feet above.
“It’s a joke,” said Susan. “Somebody placed it there.”
Just as her words were spoken the little figure moved, and the women let out a scream. “Oh my god!” shouted, Helen. “It moved!”
As they stood looking in amazement, the little guy climbed higher. At that moment, another figure appeared among the

branches. It turned out to be a baby raccoon. The little man kept moving among the limbs until he was beside the animal. Both the man and the raccoon gazed down at the four bewildered people below. The man then leaped to another tree and vanished in the darkness.

All four gave the same description: About two feet tall, long hair, and quite chubby, though he moved easily through the tree. Like the raccoon, his eyes reflected light.

For most of the night the two couples sat around discussing their weird encounter. As they spoke, one or the other would occasionally cast their light in the direction of the tree. But nothing was ever seen. The small raccoon was also gone. Some of the campers had heard stories of the little people often seen in the area, and believed that what they all had seen was one of those little creatures.

Just before turning in for the night, they heard the sound of a flute coming from the distance. They searched around and called out, but received no answer. Whoever was playing was a professional. The melody was very haunting and drifted off into the night.

The women felt uneasy and thought the music was being played by their little night visitor. Suddenly, the music came from another direction.

“Tom, I don’t like this,” Susan said, shaking her head. The others began feeling uneasy also. The strange music lasted about ten minutes, then slowly faded away.

Not much sleep was had that night. By the next morning they all decided to leave. They knew their story would never be believed, so nothing was mentioned for several years. All four became believers in the tales of the little people that have mystified this region of New York for countless years.

Chapter 25

Jenkins’ Well

L

ee Jenkins had purchased some forty acres north of Accord, New York, which is located along Highway 209. On this property were two dwellings dating back to the

1900s. Lee’s weekends were occupied renovating one of the old structures that he would later use as his home.

Lee had never entirely explored his newly-acquired land, so he decided to look it over one Sunday afternoon. While tramping through the underbrush just north of the buildings, he happened upon an old well. Dropping rocks down he estimated its depth at fifteen feet. The sides were lined with rocks, but several had fallen loose.

The next weekend, Lee returned with a flashlight and some rope. He was curious to examine the bottom. After securing the rope, he slowly slid down. Reaching the bottom he found

an old bucket entangled with some rotted rope. The floor was covered with dry leaves and the bones of several small animals that had ventured too near and fallen in. The old water line on the wall indicated the water level was around five feet. About two feet above this mark was a hole leading back into the earth. Its opening measured two feet square. Lee climbed up and shined his light into the hole. The narrow tunnel seemed to extend quite a distance before angling upward. He could see several objects near the walls, but couldn’t recognize what they were. He wondered why the tunnel was there.

Returning to the surface, Lee walked in the direction of the tunnel. Some twenty feet away he came to a rotted out tree stump. Beside it was an overgrown hole. He returned with several gallons of water, which he poured into the opening. Running back to the well, he spotted some water issuing

from the hole.

His curiosity aroused, Lee decided to investigate further. After tying the flashlight onto a length of rope he lowered it down the incline until it stopped. Once again he climbed down the well and peered into the tunnel, now illuminated from the opposite end. To his surprise, Lee saw what appeared to be a very tiny wooden bucket and a small shovel.

Knowing something about the legends of the little people, Lee speculated some of them had dug the tunnel to fetch water without being seen. There was no other explanation. He tried to retrieve the artifacts, but lost them when the tunnel collapsed. How long the hidden tunnel had been there was difficult to determine.

Lee lived there until his passing. During that period of time

he never saw any little folks lurking about his property.

Is this just another tall tale, or did Lee actually see the two items within the narrow tunnel? Why would the little ones dig such a tunnel when all they had to do was fetch water at night? These little guys are really weird at times.

Chapter 26

The Old Tree

T

his odd happening occurred during the late 1930s and just recently came to my attention. It took place near Hurleyville, New York.

David and Betty had been married for almost seven months, and lived in a home nestled among the trees just off the main road. They were young and enjoyed taking evening walks together.

One night toward the middle of September, they took a leisurely walk down the dirt road, talking about plans for the future. A cool breeze came up, signaling the approach of winter. That ever-present Moon hung in the clear sky, illuminating the surrounding countryside.

After strolling for perhaps a mile, the couple returned home. As they approached the path leading to their home, Dave hap

pened to glance up at the yellow moon and was astounded at what greeted his eyes. Taking hold of Betty's arm he pointed toward the large tree near the corner of the house.

High on the stout limb silhouetted against the moon, they saw a small figure of a man. (Where are all the tiny women in these stories? Guess they are home most of the time tending to household chores. Haven't these little guys heard of equal rights yet?)

The little guy was hanging onto a branch and gazing down at them. When the small figure realized he was being observed, he quickly leaped behind some leaves. Both Dave and Betty stood transfixed at what they saw. It wasn't a bird or a squirrel, but a real little person.

The figure moved higher into the tree until he was lost from view. Dave and Betty moved around the base of the tree to see if they could catch sight of

him. Some movement was observed, but they couldn't be sure it was the strange man. Completely bewildered at what they had seen, they turned to the house. Not much sleep was had as they sat around discussing the weird encounter. Occasionally Dave would peer out the window overlooking the tree, trying vainly to see anything among the moonlit branches.

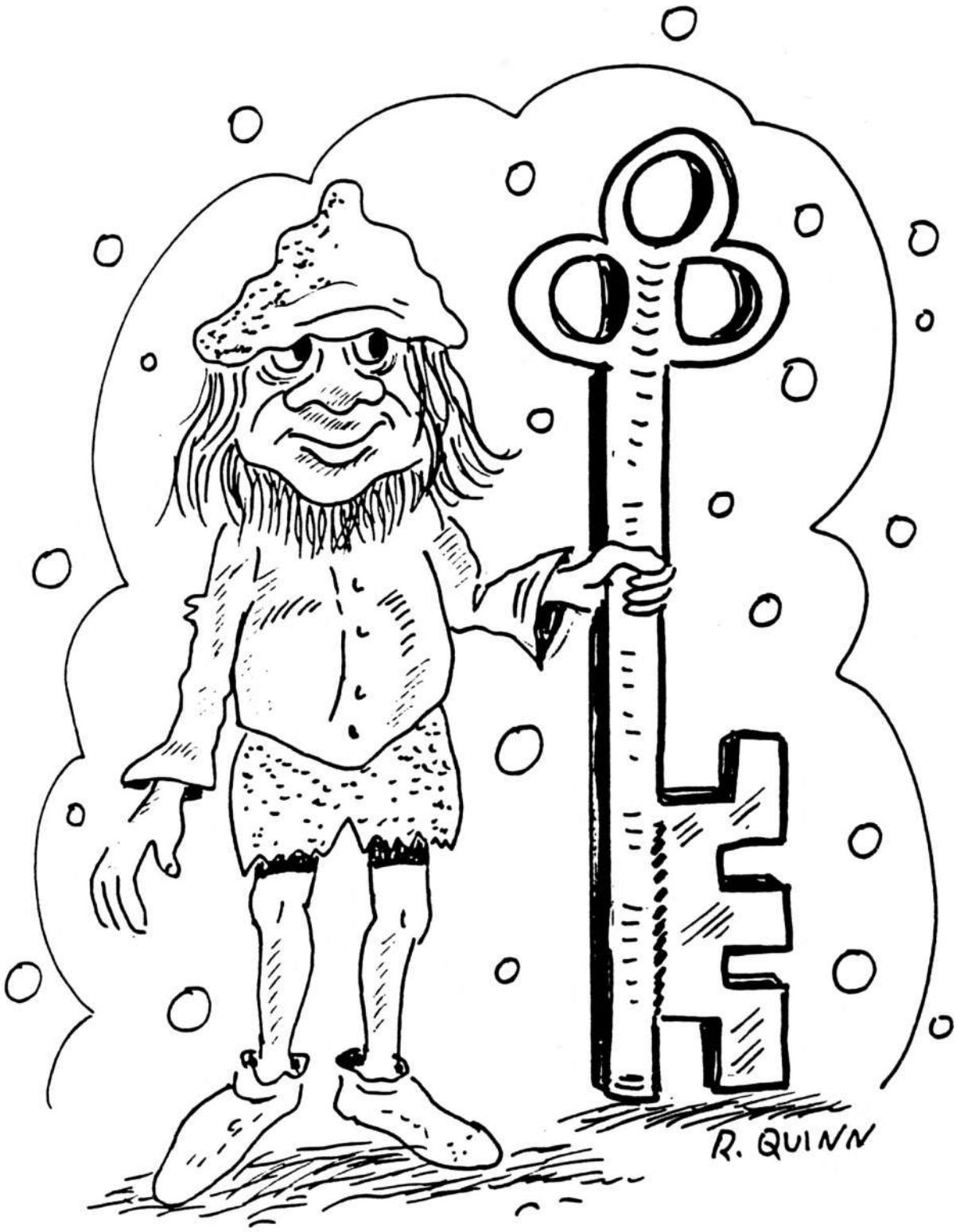
The following morning, Dave propped a ladder against the tree and climbed up among the limbs. He discovered a large knothole in the trunk. It measured ten inches across.

In the days following the first sighting, Betty would find herself near the old tree gazing intently up at the dark maze of twisting limbs. At times she would see movement among the leaves, but she was never certain it was their little neigh

bor. Both believed that a mysterious little man was residing in the tree, and that the entrance found by Dave was his home. The next time the little fellow appeared was early spring. The young couple was having a picnic close to the tree when Betty glanced upward. Sitting on a limb was their mysterious friend. He seemed to know they meant him no harm. He smiled, then disappeared among the shadows.

They kept the secret for years and never told anyone until Betty grew older. Dave passed away in 1975 and Betty moved in with relatives until she died in 1983. They never had children, so Betty told this remarkable story for the first time in 1981 to several close friends.

Is this strange tale true or just the imagination of an old lady who missed her loving husband dearly? Is the tree still standing or has it crumbled to ruin long ago? As for the little man, perhaps he still roams the countryside and has found another tree to call home.



Chapter 27

The Key

T

his mystifying story came from an anonymous resident living in New York. The woman who sent this thoughtprovoking tale stated that the strange incident occurred

during 1958, while her family was moving to another residence. But the story really begins during the summer of 1951. During this year, the family was moving into the home they occupied until 1958.

After their possessions had been moved in, the woman's father and uncle carried their heavy old trunk, which had been in the family for almost a hundred years, into the attic.

There was only one key, and her mother always kept it in a safe place. The trunk sat level on the floor, and nothing could slide underneath, not even a piece of paper.

Several weeks later her mother opened the trunk to store some items she no longer needed. Locking the trunk, she placed the key in a small box in the top drawer of her desk.

Months later, she met a woman who collected old picture frames. She remembered there were some in the trunk and offered them to her new friend. That afternoon she searched the desk but couldn't locate the key. She asked her daughters and husband if they had taken it but none had. She didn't want to damage the old trunk by forcing it open, so she left it alone hoping the key would eventually turn up, but it never did.

Almost seven years later, while again making a move, the heavy trunk was moved from its resting place. In the center of the floor beneath the trunk was the key. How it got there remains an unsolved mystery. The old antique was

much too heavy to have been moved by the children, and their mother never touched it all those years.

After it was moved into the new residence, the key once again vanished. You guessed it: the key was found again beneath the old trunk, when they decided to move it to another room several days later. What became of the mysterious trunk and key after that was not mentioned in her letter.

Are the wee folk playing tricks on the unsuspecting people of New York? They can be mischievous little pranksters when they wish to be. Then again, other mysterious forces could have been at work here.

Chapter 28

Strange New York

A

nother odd occurrence worth mentioning happened to a young boy of fourteen during a cold winter many years ago. This also took place in northern New York, so the

story goes.

This tale might be found sandwiched between reality and that famous “zone” most of us have seen on television.
The boy and his older brother would take turns emptying the ashes from the kitchen stove and fireplace. These were placed near the pump hose, about fifty feet from the rear door. Most of the time this task was finished by late afternoon or early evening.
One night, Billy didn’t get around to the chore until quite late. It was cold and silent outside, and large, fluffy white clouds dotted the dark winter sky. Picking up the buckets of

ash, Billy shuffled his way toward the dump site. The only sound to reach his ears was the crunching of the frozen snow beneath his feet. As he reached the halfway point, Bill happened to look skyward and froze in fear. Floating above the trees about sixty yards away was the giant head of an old, bearded man.

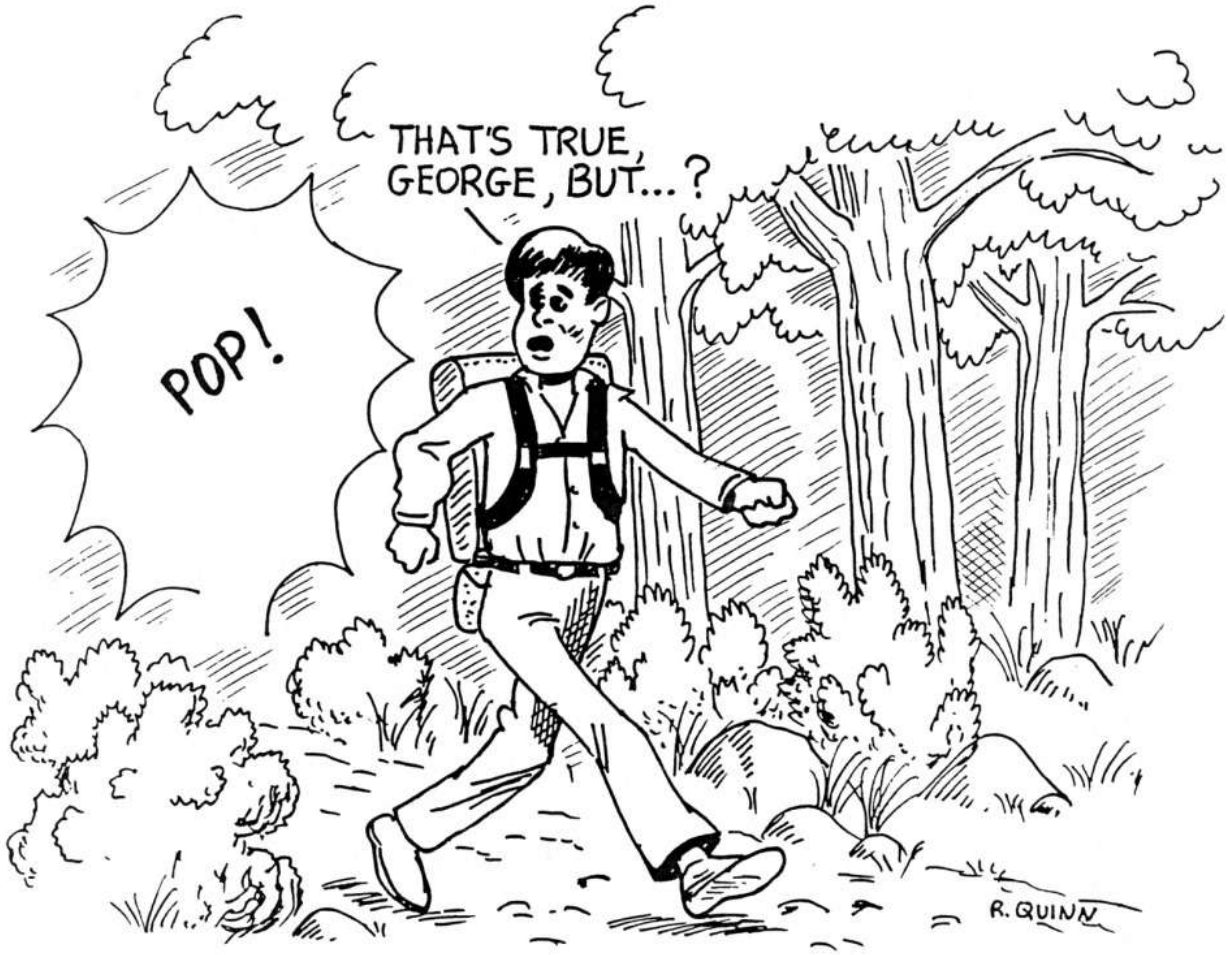
Billy’s description of the weird apparition was quite vivid. It resembled some kind of Greek god. The face had two dark holes for eyes and a large, sneering mouth that opened and closed as the menacing head rocked back and forth. It looked as if it was laughing, but no sound came forth from the ghostly figure. The face had strong features and its beard and hair consisted of long, flowing curls.

Bill dropped both buckets and ran screaming toward the house, slipping and

falling several times on the way. His parents and brother heard the ruckus and reached the door just as he came flying through, yelling about a giant head in the night sky. When he finally persuaded them to look outside, all that was visible were a few clouds, but none resembled any hideous head. His father said he must have mistaken a cloud for the head, and his eyes were playing tricks on him.

Billy insisted it wasn't a cloud. Besides, the head was not over the pump house where a few clouds remained, but near the trees toward the right, where no clouds could be seen.

It was quite awhile before Billy would venture outside the house alone at night. He told his frightening tale to anyone who would listen, and one of them was me.



Chapter 29

Where Are They?

T

his strange disappearance occurred somewhere in New York state. I cannot recall all the details surrounding this case, but perhaps it's still remembered in the vicinity where it happened.

A group of five or six campers had taken off early one morning from their campsite for a hike through the forest. They followed a trail that wound lazily through the timber. Around noon, they stopped for lunch and rested beneath some shady trees. During this break, some took pictures while others engaged in small talk.

Afterwards, the small party headed back to camp about six miles distant. Several walked together while others hiked alone. They were stretched out perhaps thirty feet as they moved down the picturesque trail. Little did they realize the day would

come to a mysterious and frightful ending.

The individual next to the last member was about ten feet ahead of his companion. During their journey the two talked occasionally about various subjects. The hiker turned to answer a question George had just asked, but he was nowhere to be seen.

After calling him and receiving no reply, the hikers spread out and searched the immediate area, but couldn't locate the missing man. There were no hidden holes along the route, nor any deep ravines he could have fallen into.

After his disappearance was reported, a large search party descended on the area and began their intense search. They never found the missing hiker.

To this day the gentleman has never been located. The odd circumstance surrounding this case is that the hiker vanished within several feet of his

friend. Where he disappeared to I guess will never be answered. Perhaps he stepped through some kind of time warp, and will reappear sometime in the future. Or perhaps he vanished into the past.

There is some speculation about small doorways that open and close at random. These are known as “dead spaces” by some. Anything caught within them will be disintegrated instantly. These areas could also be doorways into other dimensions. Sounds a little like science fiction, but something is making people vanish suddenly.

This brings to mind another vanishing that occurred during the 1960s. A family of four left on a two-day fishing trip. After locating a suitable campsite near the river, they parked

their small trailer beside some trees. Later the parents and daughter went fishing. Jimmy, their fourteen-year-old son wasn’t feeling well and decided to remain at the trailer. As the family was returning for lunch they heard Jimmy shouting from behind the trailer. “No! No, leave me alone! I don’t want to go!” They thought somebody might be trying to kidnap the boy. Dropping his fishing rod, the father ran to his son’s aid. As he reached the rear, he again heard the boy cry out. “No, no, please!” A split second later the father rounded the corner, and was surprised to find nobody there.

He had heard the boy a moment before, yet he had vanished instantaneously. They searched but never found him. Authorities were called and they came up empty-handed. The young lad had vanished off the face of the earth. Jimmy was there one second and gone the next.

There are numerous disappearances like this occurring throughout the world. Strange and unexplainable things do happen almost every year, and few, if any, appear in national newspapers. If they do appear in print, its usually in local papers where the incident occurred.

We had something like the above happen in Tucson, Arizona, many years ago. The boy was seen returning to his dad’s truck on the desert. He was visible one second and gone the next. Hundreds searched for days but he also

was never seen again. I knew his stepfather personally.

Chapter 30

The Doctor’s Office

A

nother tale concerning the wee people comes from a gentleman living on Long Island. His story parallels my encounter of 1942.

Bob’s mother was visiting the doctor and Bob was left in the waiting room. While thumbing through a magazine, he heard a gentle tapping coming from a nearby window. Out on the ledge stood a small man about a foot tall. The tiny creature was peering at Bob and tapping at the windowpane with a walking stick.

Bob’s memory of the incident was quite clear, even when he shared it with me many years later. The creature waved and smiled several times, and was dressed in green clothing. As Bob’s mother entered the room, the little fellow looked toward her, smiled at Bob, and vanished.

On their way home Bob told his mother what had happened. Smiling, she said he was dreaming.
Do some children and adults have the ability to see into other dimensions periodically for short times without realizing it? Are there hidden lands just beyond our view? Maybe there is a race of unknown magical beings that inhabit the back country of certain locations. They might venture into our world to visit, play tricks, and be seen by a chosen few.
Are the stories we hear real, or are they only imaginary, brought to life in the minds of those witnessing these strange sightings, and taking on a three-dimensional form?

The region that seems to generate the majority of these sightings occupies the northeastern area of the country. There are countless tales of the unexplained throughout the world. Washington state has its sea serpents, and Bigfoot roams remote forests and mountain slopes of the Cascade Range. Here in the Southwest there are tales of Spanish padres’ ghosts lurking among the ruins

of long-abandoned mission sites on moonlit nights. People have also reported seeing strange blue-green lights floating near old abandoned mine workings.

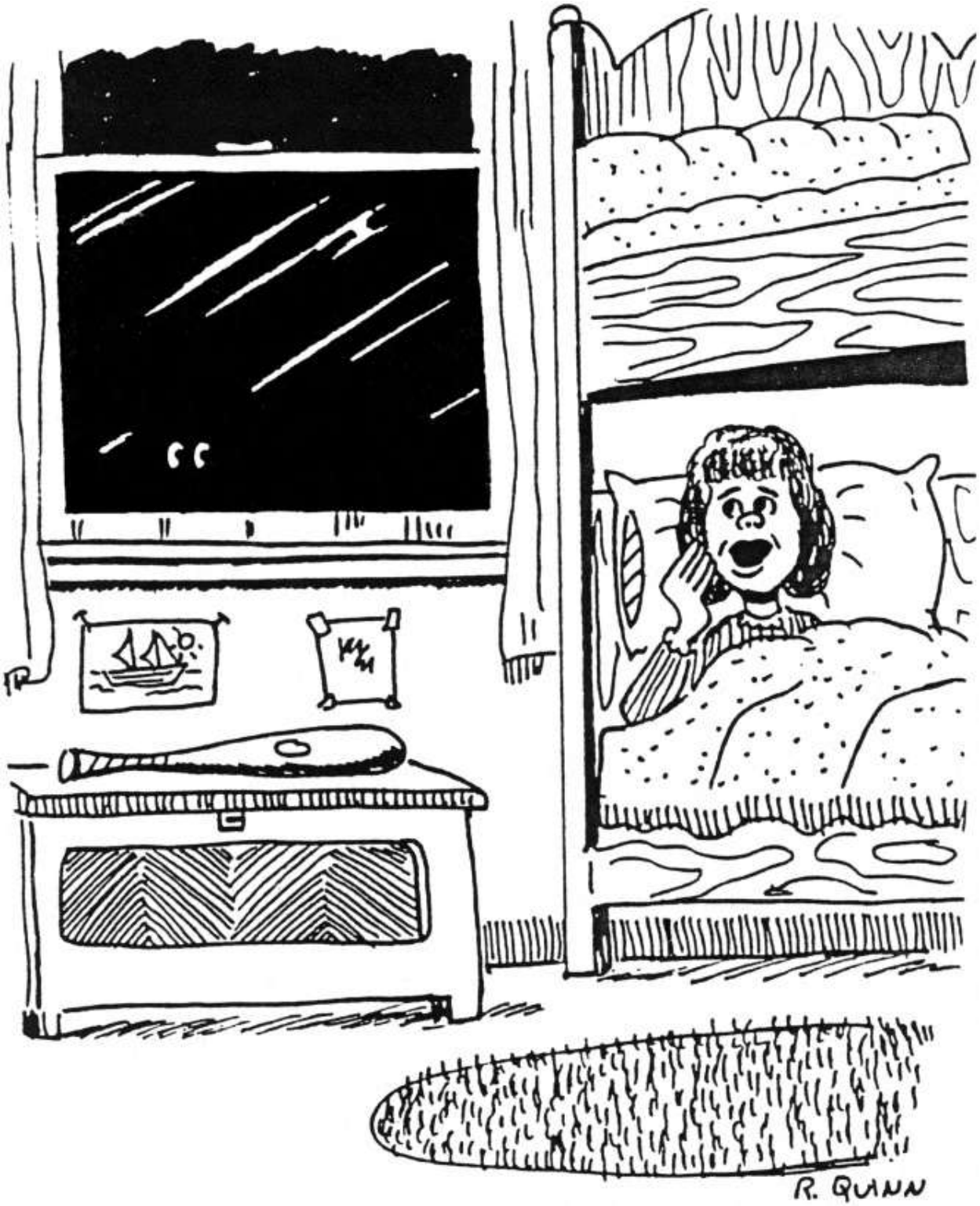
Upstate New York might just harbor a population of little folks that prefer to remain unknown to the outside world. One should remain open-minded, as they might be nothing more than grand illusions on the highest scale.

If there are any mischievous little creatures residing in the hills, they are most likely related to the Chillie Dhu of Scotland or the Cluricaub (Kloor-akwan) of Ireland. Both are quite

small and resemble humans in appearance.

The grotesque man seen by Mrs. Pratt's aunt that midsummer day could have been either a gruesome firdarrig or a goblin. Both are considered very ugly.

If these mysterious little beings did exist at one time, perhaps they no longer do. Or perhaps they have abandoned the upstate New York region for more isolated areas. If I hadn't seen one myself in 1942, I might look upon these stories as nothing more than fascinating folk tales told of the haunting Catskill Mountains. But there is always the strong possibility that some of these sightings are true. As I have always said, if only one is authentic, then something really strange is happening in this area of upstate New York.



Chapter 31

Night Eyes

D

uring 1989 I received a letter postmarked from Mongaup Valley. It was signed “Sandra.” No last name or address was mentioned. Her strange tale occurred

when she was seven.

Their home was located on a steep hill, and the front bedroom window of her brother’s room was about seven feet above the ground. She had always wanted to sleep by herself. This opportunity finally arrived when her brother was to spend the night at a friend’s house.

She asked to sleep in his room, like a big girl, by herself. Her mother agreed, so she took her dolls and played for a while on the bed. Her mother came in later, kissed her good night, and turned off the lights.

After she climbed under the covers, Sandra looked toward the window. There she saw two bright eyes peering in. She wasn’t frightened and described them as being gold in color. They vanished, then appeared again on the other side of the long, narrow window. Sandra called out for her mother, saying that somebody was watching her through the window. Her mother entered, turning on the lights. Nothing was seen outside. Perhaps it was the neighbor’s dog, suggested her mother. Sandra said the dog was too small to reach the window.

Sandra’s mother asked her if she still wanted to sleep there alone. She answered yes. After her mother left, she pulled the covers up around her and glanced again toward the window. The golden eyes returned. This time, Sandra could make out the small, smiling face of a young girl. In a short while she drifted off to sleep, but awoke several hours later. The little face with the gold eyes appeared once more. Sandra crawled out of bed and walked toward the window. Again, the eyes disappeared. Nothing more

occurred during the remainder of the night.

“I do wonder how long that face was there,” wrote Sandra. “Me talking to my dolls must have kept that little girl pretty fascinated. Why she kept returning while I was asleep, I’ll never know. She might have thought my dolls were little people, too.”

Was it a bird or a small animal, or were the little ones on the prowl again that evening. There were no other lights on when the room was in darkness so the glow must have come from the eyes themselves.

Perhaps other sightings are occurring today, but those expe

riencing them have decided to remain silent, afraid they might be placed into the same group, as people claiming to have seen UFOs and little bug-eyed aliens.

MAKE THE BEST OF IT GANG.
THIS IS HOME FROM NOW ON.

Chapter 32

Fact or Fantasy

T

he time and place: early 1500s, and what now is upstate New York. It was a peaceful night, and campfires from Indian villages could be seen near the lakes. In one

encampment a few squaws were finishing last-minute chores. It was a clear evening and the stars stood out from a black autumn sky.

As one elderly woman was gathering wood, her attention was drawn to one star that seemed to be moving rapidly across the heavens and increasing in size. The old woman screamed, alerting others in the village. As they emerged from their shelters she pointed skyward. The bright object circled overhead with sparks gushing from its side. The people all dived for cover, fearing it was going to crash nearby. A moment later it sheared off treetops and plowed and skidded through the dark

forest. It came to rest beside a steep embankment.

When silence again returned, the only sound heard was a hissing coming from the strange object. The Indians, thinking some sky demon had arrived, hid among their shelters throughout the night and watched. The strange night visitor rested about three hundred yards from the encampment.

As dawn broke the following morning, a few brave warriors crept curiously toward the object, which now sat silently among the broken trees. They gazed in bewilderment at the odd-looking thing that had fallen from the sky. Never in their lives had they seen such a sight. It was oval in shape and about sixty feet in length. Its surface was dull gray and the only opening was a long gash on its left side.

Soon there came a humming sound, and slowly an opening appeared and a platform slid out until it touched the ground. The interior was illuminated, and shadows could be seen moving within. Fear gripped the Indians and they

all fled back to safety. Later that day they abandoned camp and fled the area.

Two small creatures appeared at the opening. Both wore shiny green, metallic clothing and were less than two feet tall. Their features were human, but they had extremely large eyes.

As they disembarked from the craft, others followed, until almost sixty of them stood beside the ship. Most were amazed at the size of everything around them. Afterwards several ventured off to explore the strange new world they had crashed on. Others began unloading various items from their crippled craft.

Upon their return, the explorer informed the others that

the land was inhabited by a race of primitive giants. Realizing their ship would never fly again, they began the tedious job of concealing it until no sign remained.

In the following days they used machines taken from their ship to bore tunnels into the earth, where large living quarters were made. At night many would gaze longingly into the heavens, hoping to be rescued by fellow comrades. But no search party ever came. As the months turned into years, Indians of the region would occasionally spot these strange little visitors in the forest, and so the legend of the little people was born.

When their shiny clothing wore out, it was replaced with skins taken from small animals the extraterrestrials hunted. In time they split up, forming small groups, and moved farther back into the hills.

By now the location of their craft has been completely overgrown and no trace remains today. Many strange machines were moved below ground, and these were used to make life more comfortable on this hostile world.

Years turned into centuries and the little folks were now a permanent fixture in the surrounding countryside. They kept to themselves and never made contact with the wild giants.

Their communities were underground and these were connected by numerous

passageways that spread out like a spiderweb beneath the surface.

When Europeans began moving into the area, they heard rumors about little beings living among the hills from friendly Indians. Over the years some settlers claimed to have seen them, and tales began to spread across the land.

Hundreds of years later the descendants of the early survivors are believed to still live in what is now known as the Catskill Mountains. Their advanced technology is still in use, but those witnessing these powers believe it's magic.

How many remain is unknown. Most, if not all, consider these sightings to be nothing more than tall tales. But those who have had the rare opportunity to see them know better.

Fact or fantasy, something very odd has been occurring in and around the haunting forests of the Catskills for hundreds of years. If only one encounter is true, then a colony of little people are living somewhere among those dark rolling hills, unknown to the outside world. Let's hope it remains that way, as we could only bring them harm.

Did they arrive here from the stars? I guess that will never be known. The only way this controversial subject will ever be solved is if one is captured, and I find this highly unlikely. They have never hurt anyone, but several have shown a little hostility. Like they say, "There are always a few bad apples in every barrel."

Chapter 33

Conclusions

T

hese wonderful, amazing stories come from honest, rational people who had a brief encounter into the unknown world of those magical, mysterious beings

known as the Little People.

Are these living, breathing entities real, or created within that marvelous thing known as the human brain? Is our mind capable of producing three-dimensional figures that also react to our emotions? Are these reports nothing more than grand illusions, or is something out there among the hills that is beyond our understanding?

Lights in the night sky can be misinterpreted for UFOs. A lumbering bear can be mistaken for Bigfoot. A twisted log in the water can be seen as a lake monster. But I doubt that a squirrel, or any small animal could resemble a little man carrying a walking stick with a wide smile on his face and glowing eyes.

I hope these stories have provided some escapism from the troubles of our real world.

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